

*“ the result of the criminal and barbarous actions of the Belgians ”* Pecksniff is for ever dethroned from his eminence as a type of sanctimonious hypocrite, in favour of this Imperial expert.

What, then, is to be the outcome of this cruel and murderous infraction of all laws, human and divine? Is there to be no end to this bloody reign of terror? Are we really to be conquered by these inhuman brutes? Can we possibly be in the wrong, and deserve such brutal oppression?

We are not in the wrong. No nation can be in the wrong whose King can address his subjects in such words as these:

“ During the past few weeks the peoples of my whole Empire, at Home and Overseas, have moved with one mind and purpose to confront and overthrow an unparalleled assault upon the continuity of civilization and the peace of mankind.

“ The calamitous conflict is not of my seeking, my voice has been cast throughout on the side of peace. My ministers earnestly strove to allay the causes of strife, and to appease difference with which my Empire was not concerned. Had I stood aside when, in defiance of pledges to which my Kingdom was a party, the soil of Belgium was violated and her cities laid desolate, when the very life of the French nation was threatened with extinction, I should have sacrificed my honour, and given to destruction the liberties of my Empire and of mankind. I rejoice that every part of my Empire is with me in this decision.

“ Paramount regard for treaty faith, and the pledged word of rulers and peoples, is the common heritage of Great Britain and of the Empire.

“ My people in the self-governing Dominions have shown beyond all doubt that they whole-heartedly endorse the grave decision which it was necessary to take.”